

From: Steven K. Reinhardt
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

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As an assistant professor in the Computer Science and Engineering division of the University of Michigan's Electrical Engineering and Computer Science department, I am writing to protest the terms of the proposed anti-trust settlement with Microsoft.

Microsoft has repeatedly and blatantly leveraged their monopoly of the desktop PC operating systems market to gain a competitive advantage in other markets, and has shown no indication of regret for these actions. It is critical that Microsoft be barred from repeating this behavior for competition in the information technology sector to survive. The next few years will be crucial in the deployment of widespread Internet-based services (such as Microsoft's .NET), and the form that these services take will largely determine the level of consumer choice and privacy available in this domain. I am also concerned about Microsoft's role in digital rights management technology (as embodied in their Windows Media Player). The applications of this technology must tread a fine line between copyright protection and fair use. If the technology is in the hands of a single corporation such as Microsoft, it will be too easy for them to ally with other large media conglomerates to force solutions that erode consumers' fair use of digital content. While I believe Microsoft has a right to compete in these areas, they must be forced to do so on an equal footing with other corporations.

I feel that the US DOJ settlement is inadequate in its terms and lacks credible enforcement provisions even for the weak concessions it forces on Microsoft. Again, I encourage you to continue to press for a more thorough and enforceable settlement that will provide consumers with choice and freedom in the years to come.

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